Just like skiing, initial climbing experiences should be made in flatter terrain. First steps should be taken on hiking trails.

**Hiking trail:** easy, wide, in valley areas and adjacent forests

**For:** beginners and walkers

**Requirements:** sports shoes and weather appropriate clothing

Only after establishing adequate fitness levels, should you go one-step further and attempt red-rated mountain trails. You should bear in mind that physical fitness, sureness of foot and a good head for heights is not something that can be achieved from one day to the next, but is developed with time and practise along various mountain trails.

**Moderately difficult mountain trail:** often narrow, steep, exposed in places, you may need to use your hands to help balance in some sections.

**For:** surefooted and experienced hikers

**Requirements:** good physical condition, alpine experience and mountain equipment

There is also a lot to learn about hiking a black-rated mountain trail, and this too takes time. The same applies here: practise makes perfect.

**Difficult mountain trail:** mostly narrow, steep, very exposed, long sections secured with rope or cable, climbing passages.

**For:** those with a good head for heights, surefooted and experienced alpine climbers

**Requirements:** very good physical condition, alpine experience and mountain equipment, including alpine safety gear, good weather conditions

This terrain is not suitable for everyone.

**Alpine route:** Exposed, unmarked trails and unsecured terrain, or on glaciers

**For:** those with a good head for heights, surefooted and experienced alpine climbers

**Requirements:** excellent physical condition, comprehensive alpine experience, alpine climbing gear, safety and orienteering aids, good weather conditions

Take your time and make sure you come home safe and sound.

*Source: Österreichischer Alpenverein*